

NSF GRFP funds YOU, the student.

A friendly reminder from Katie Wedemeyer-Strombel ([@krwedemeyer](#))

Best of luck as you embark on your NSF GRFP writing! It is a challenge, remember that just drafting an application is an accomplishment in itself. It is not easy, it took me many, many rewrites, some tears and screams of frustration, and support of good friends and family. It is a process.

If you get funded, remember that the NSF GRFP funds YOU, the student. Not your prospective PI, not your project, not your University, but YOU. It is the NSF seeing potential in you and your work. I say this to remind you that you are not trapped in your GRFP project. As long as the project you end up doing falls under the same scope as the project you submitted, you are fine (see the NSF GRFP handbook for specific details). You are not trapped with the adviser or the university that you originally listed in your application. Sometimes (and more often than we think), advisers and universities don't work out for many reasons, and often a change is necessary. This is okay, this is normal. If your lab or university is not a good fit for you personally and/or professionally you are able to take your GRFP with you to a lab and/or university that suits your needs better. For instance, after I received my GRFP I changed advisers, departments, then universities all together, and my project changed (still under the same field and scope but different species focus, different fieldwork locations) and my GRFP came with me the whole way, with no issues. As you are writing yours, and anytime throughout graduate school, you are not trapped in your project – you have choices. It is your education, and it is important to find a lab and university that will allow you to get what you need out of your education.